

Session 15-14 a Special Meeting of the Homer City Council was called to order on March 24, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Mary E. Wythe at the Homer City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: LEWIS, REYNOLDS, ROBERTS, VAN DYKE, ZAK

ABSENT: BURGESS (unexcused)

STAFF: CITY MANAGER YODER
CITY CLERK JOHNSON
FINANCE DIRECTOR LI
LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIXON
POLICE CHIEF ROBL
PORT AND HARBOR DIRECTOR HAWKINS

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 5)

Mayor Wythe called for a motion for approval of the agenda.

LEWIS/REYNOLDS – SO MOVED.

ROBERTS/ZAK - MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ADD ITEM B UNDER NEW BUSINESS: NEXT STEPS FOR CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT (IF NEEDED).

In the event the Council does not reach a conclusion they can determine the next step for recruitment.

VOTE: (amendment) YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VOTE: (main motion as amended) YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Interviews for City Manager Candidates

Matt Clarke

Comments of the audience on Matt Clarke only

Kevin Hogan, city resident, told the Council both candidates would have rose to the top of any pool. Matt Clarke's handshake means something; after shaking his hand you don't have to go home and take a shower.

Mayor Wythe called for a recess at 5:50 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Mayor Wythe ruled Councilmember Burgess' absence as unexcused since he did not provide notification.

REYNOLDS/ROBERTS - IF COUNCILMEMBER BURGESS IS ABLE TO ATTEND THIS EVENING SINCE HE MISSED THE FIRST HALF OF THE MEETING HE WILL JOIN THE AUDIENCE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Councilmember Burgess arrived and was told he would need to join the audience. He exited the meeting.

Katie Koester

Comments of the audience on Katie Koester only

There were no comments of the audience.

Comments of the audience on both Matt Clarke and Katie Koester

Larry Slone, city resident, commented we are fortunate to have employees of such high personal standards. They are both intelligent, have energy, are articulate, ambitious, and have done extensive preparation for the interview. Both have extensive knowledge of city background and operations. Katie has an edge on communication. Matt has the edge on understanding how to do things. The City will be okay taking the chance on either candidate. He gave Matt his nod but would consider either candidate for a six-month trial.

Mayor Wythe called for a recess at 6:36 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Councilmember Van Dyke believes both candidates are well qualified. One was a better communicator and is more confident. Both have excellent ideas of economic diversity for the next century.

Councilmember Lewis gives both candidates credit for interviewing and taking that chance from a secure position to an at-will position at the Council's whim. Both have strengths and weaknesses. The City Manager's job is to promote the City with the legislature and needs a broader view of what is going on instead of just one specific area. One candidate had a better view and has those qualities for a good city manager. Neither one has the experience in upper management, but one definitely has a better grasp on what the City needs and has had experience working up to that position.

Councilmember Zak commented it was impressive to know we have both candidates on the City's team. It is refreshing to have well qualified internal candidates; they are two young leaders who have both have lived here in the community bringing a new understanding of how they perceive our community.

Councilmember Reynolds agreed with the comments thus far. It is a huge risk to all candidates to apply and it is important to recognize all three have done so. It is important for them to feel confident. Councilmember Reynolds feels anxious about the idea of Matt believing he needs to reserve his old position. Although she understands the need to protect his family and desire to remain in the community he can't take that approach with a job of this enormity. She did not see it as overly confident. Katie did not have the caveat that she needed to back out if it didn't work.

Councilmember Roberts concurred with much of the comments. She thanked all the applicants for applying and could be satisfied with either candidate. When she saw on Matt's application that he wouldn't take the job until guaranteed his old job that concerned her. The city manager needs to have a wide understanding of all the city. One candidate was a little narrow in their focus area and did not show the whole department.

Mayor Wythe had a 30+ point difference between the candidates in her scoring. Although some areas are just a point off, it is very unfortunate for Matt that he didn't answer question 11 because he got off track of where his questions were. It speaks to being scripted with your answers. Having notes is one thing, but having it to the point it could be distracting to you leads to a disadvantage such as this. It is concerning to her that a person would contemplate moving into an executive management position at this level and request that your current employer hold your job for six months, particularly the months that are the busiest time of the year at the port and harbor. It felt like a big oversight to her. She would hope the person in the city manager position would be interested and willing to move forward but not ask for his job to stay open. Even though Katie's position is a different nature, Katie doesn't see we have the luxury of holding a position vacant for six months. The contracting system doesn't allow for a probationary period; they either make the cut or they don't. The Council and future councils should be people who made a decision to hire a person who may not have all the qualifications with the exchange that we are committed to their success as well. Either candidate comes with an entirely solid core. Katie's is stronger with the legislative background. It is a huge part of what the city manager provides for us because in the absence

of someone in Juneau they become that person for us. Katie comes with a stronger core, but Matt has the requisite skills to be successful in the job because the Council will support whoever they choose to ensure success.

Councilmember Zak commented Matt has good leadership effectiveness. He appreciates the concern and is willing to do a six-month trial. In looking either candidate in the eye he felt they both had strong leadership abilities. He did not feel that same weight when we came to holding Matt's position open. If the job were offered to him he would try to find out how to hold the position because of his qualifications. Both interviewed very well, there was good eye contact and they were both prepared. In professional development one candidate is attending harbormaster conferences and the other is continuing a second master's degree. We have a good work team in Homer with good strong core values in the work force.

Memorandum 15-045, from City Clerk, Re: Request for Executive Session Pursuant to AS 44.62.310 (A-C)(2) Subjects That Tend to Prejudice the Reputation and Character of Any Person, Provided the Person May Request a Public (Discuss Character of Candidates Matt Clarke and Katie Koester).

Mayor Wythe called for a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss characters of the candidates.

The Council did not offer a motion.

LEWIS/REYNOLDS - MOVED TO OFFER THE CITY MANAGER JOB TO KATIE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Memorandum 15-046, from City Clerk, Re: Request for Executive Session Pursuant to AS 44.62.310 (c)(1)-(2) Matters, the Immediate Knowledge of Which Would Clearly Have an Adverse Effect Upon the Finances of the City, and Matters Which by Law, Municipal Charter, or Ordinance are Required to be Confidential (Discuss Compensation of City Manager Candidate).

Mayor Wythe called for a motion for an Executive Session to discuss compensation of City Manager candidate and to include the Personnel Director.

VAN DYKE/LEWIS – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

LEWIS/REYNOLDS - MOVED TO ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. LEWIS, REYNOLDS, ROBERTS, ZAK, VAN DYKE

Motion carried.

The Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tempore Roberts stated in Executive Session the Council discussed the potential offer of \$103,000 plus 5% in the next 3 years on January 1 of 2016, 2017, and 2018, core insurance fully funded, leave in the 6 – 9 year category, and the contract will be until December 31, 2018. This offer will be made to the new City Manager selected, Katie Koester, and we have directed Andrea Browning to proceed with the offer.

B. Next Steps for City Manager Recruitment

This item was not needed.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

There were no comments of the audience.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Klinkner was not present.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY CLERK

City Clerk Johnson congratulated Katie and thinks the Council made a good choice.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Yoder was not present.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Wythe congratulated Katie and hopes when Andrea reaches out to her following her background check there will be a resolution for an agreement at the April 13 meeting and she will be sworn in. She thanked the Council who did a great job in weighing the interview process. It felt much more at ease because we went through all the bumps and bumbles last time.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Councilmember Roberts congratulated Katie and hopes she accepts the offer. She is excited to have the process winding down. She suggested that future councils not put the questions out there for candidates. We want to see people think on their feet. Some people in the community felt it was important for the public process, but the best interviews occur without people knowing the questions ahead of time. They could then show us what they know very easily.

Councilmember Zak congratulated Katie and both applicants for stepping up. For stepping up internally they did a wonderful job. There were some other things the Council talked about, such as mentorship.

Mayor Wythe said the Council talked about retaining Mr. Yoder through the end of May so there is transition time and time to hire a replacement for Katie's position. On the next agenda we will come back with a dollar amount to retain mentor services from Mr. Yoder through December 31st. Mr. Yoder has brought a nice different insight to the City and they would like to see Katie access that. It will be a certain amount of dollars through the end of the year and that is the reason there is no increased compensation (for Katie) at six months. Staff has talked about putting an assistant manager position together and instead of filling Katie's existing position it would fill the assistant city manager position to assist with some of the other activities.

Councilmember Zak told Katie she is filling some big shoes. Katie should have extreme confidence in moving forward since she has unanimous approval. She doesn't have to worry about a 5-1 vote. With Katie's experience in Juneau and her experience on the Economic Development Board of Directors (EDD) she is going to represent Homer well. The Council is so confident that she will do exceptionally and are looking at the City benefiting from her representation.

Councilmember Van Dyke echoed the sentiments of congratulations. He is pleased with the Council's decision. Assuming by the big smile on Katie's face it is probably an affirmative that she will accept the job.

Councilmember Reynolds echoed everyone else's comments. She is sure it was not an easy decision for Katie to put her hat in the ring, but she is glad she did. She is also glad that Matt did as he presented a good case for himself. She feels very confident in the Council's decision and looks forward to working with Katie in a different capacity.

Councilmember Lewis told Katie the best of luck; you're going to need it.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Wythe adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Monday, April 13, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. and Committee of the Whole 5:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Approved: _____